

RECOGNIZING THE LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. REID. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Hispanic American Resource Team's (H.A.R.T.) 10th Academy for their efforts to combat crimes against Hispanic-Americans, while building good will and trust between the city's police department and the Hispanic community.

For more than a decade, H.A.R.T. has fulfilled and exceeded its mission, "to build and maintain positive relationships between the Hispanic community and the police through compassion and innovative thinking." At its core, the H.A.R.T. program trains and places talented officers who are fluent in English and Spanish to work directly with Spanish-dominant community members. It is through language ability, cultural competence, and dedication that H.A.R.T. maintains public safety for the broader community regardless of language capability or immigration status.

A centerpiece of the educational services H.A.R.T. provides is the Hispanic Citizens Academy which offers an intensive 12-week training program in Spanish to non-English speaking community members to impart knowledge on how to navigate through routine law enforcement protocols, including knowing their legal rights and how to contact the police in case of an emergency. The Hispanic Citizens Academy helps strengthen the partnership between the Hispanic immigrant community and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. In fact, the National League of Cities recognized Las Vegas and the H.A.R.T. program as one of the top 17 U.S. police departments for good practices in a June 2011 report. H.A.R.T.'s work serves as a model for other police departments across the Nation to ensure public safety in immigrant communities by keeping them informed and engaged.

On May 23, 2012, H.A.R.T. will be celebrating the graduation of individuals serving in the 10th Hispanic Citizens Academy, a stage shared by more than 500 alumni of the program. I am a proud supporter of the H.A.R.T. program, and I applaud the leadership and dedication law enforcement officers have demonstrated to the growing Hispanic population of my home State of Nevada. I ask my colleagues to please join me in congratulating the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and its H.A.R.T. initiative as they celebrate the 10th Hispanic Citizens Academy. I wish H.A.R.T. continued success in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES CECIL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, today I wish to honor Mr. James Cecil, who is believed to be the last living member of the 729th Platoon of the 2nd

Marine Division, known as the Lexington Platoon. Mr. Cecil and 69 other men from the central Kentucky area formed the Platoon in 1942, 8 months after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. These young men went on to fight in some of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific, including in Okinawa, Saipan, Tinian, and Guadalcanal.

The Lexington Platoon was honored on Thursday, May 17 at the Lexington Urban City Council meeting, with Mr. Cecil being the only member present. Lexington Mayor Jim Gray proclaimed it James Cecil Day, and Councilman Jay McChord spoke about his interviews with Mr. Cecil while writing his 2010 book, *A Veteran's Legacy: Field Kit Journal*.

James Cecil grew up on a tobacco farm, and chose to join the Marines when the United States entered the war rather than being drafted. He was promoted from private to corporal after killing a Japanese officer and obtaining his map of artillery positions, and received a Purple Heart for injuries suffered during the battle of Saipan in June 1944.

Although Mr. Cecil was recommended for officer candidate school in August 1945, he never got the chance to attend, as in the weeks following, the United States bombed Japan, thus ending World War II.

After his service, Mr. Cecil moved to Ohio and became the owner of a successful trucking company. He moved back to Lexington after the death of his wife, Janet, in 1988. Today, Mr. Cecil is in good health and still often reflects on his wartime experiences. He says that he feels "honored and proud that [he] served [his] country."

I would like to ask at this time for my colleagues in the U.S. Senate to join me in recognizing Mr. James Cecil for his brave service to our Nation during World War II. There was recently an article published in the Lexington Herald-Leader highlighting Mr. Cecil's valorous service and his platoon's legacy. I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Lexington Herald-Leader, May 15, 2012]

SOLE SURVIVING MARINES' LEXINGTON PLATOON MEMBER TO BE HONORED (By Tom Eblen)

Eight months after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, hundreds of people gathered around the steps of the Fayette County Courthouse to honor James T. Cecil and 69 other local boys.

The recent graduates of Henry Clay, Lafayette and other central Kentucky high schools were forming the Lexington Platoon of the United States Marine Corps. Mayor T. Ward Havely and other dignitaries spoke at the mass-induction ceremony. A young lady sang the Marine Hymn, and women and children wept, the Lexington Herald and Leader reported in late August 1942.

Platoon members left in buses that day for processing in Louisville and training in San Diego. From there, they joined some of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific Theater: Okinawa, Saipan, Tinian and Guadalcanal.

The Lexington Platoon will be honored again Thursday at the Urban County Council meeting. This time, Cecil, 88, will be the only platoon member present. "As best we can tell, I'm the only one left," he said.

Mayor Jim Gray will present a proclamation declaring James Cecil Day. Councilman Jay McChord will speak about how he met Cecil and other World War II veterans while writing and illustrating his 2010 book, *A Veteran's Legacy: Field Kit Journal*.

"We're losing so many of these guys every day, it's good any time we can honor them," McChord said. "We need to remind ourselves of who they are and what they did."

Cecil and Mitch Alcorn, his Lafayette High School buddy and the longtime Midway postmaster, began tracking down their fellow Lexington Platoon members several years ago, searching the Internet and running ads in veterans magazines.

By this time last year, the group had dwindled to the two of them and Elwood Watkins, who earned a Silver Star and three Purple Hearts in battle. Watkins died July 12. Alcorn, who earned a Purple Heart and later fought in the Korean and Vietnam wars as an Army officer, died February 18.

Cecil grew up on a tobacco farm off Nicholasville Road. "We didn't have any money, but we had plenty to eat," he said. "We had milk cows, chickens and a big garden."

When the war came, he decided to join the Marines rather than wait to be drafted. After training, platoon members were scattered to various units of the 2nd Marine Division, although Cecil served alongside Alcorn and a few others from Lexington. "We were just like a big family," he said.

As I talked with Cecil last week, he pulled out a small envelope. Inside was a portrait of a Japanese officer he killed, and money and a ration card he found in the officer's pocket. That wasn't all: The officer was carrying a map of artillery positions, a find that got Cecil promoted from private to corporal.

Cecil earned a Purple Heart for wounds suffered in the battle of Saipan on June 20, 1944. He survived several Japanese suicide attacks on his camps at night.

"The next morning you couldn't walk without walking on a dead Marine or a dead Japanese," he said.

At the battle of Okinawa, a Japanese suicide pilot hit the USS *Hinsdale* before Cecil's unit could land on the beach. Cecil spent 45 minutes in the cold water, watching for sharks, before a Navy destroyer rescued him.

"We had so many killed and wounded," Cecil said. "Every battle, you just didn't know who was going to be next."

Cecil's only trip stateside came in August 1945, when he was recommended for officer candidate school. Before he could begin, though, U.S. forces dropped atomic bombs on Japan, and World War II ended.

After the war, Cecil had a successful career as the owner of an Ohio-based trucking company. He moved back to Lexington after Janet, his wife of 52 years, died in 1998. In his apartment, he proudly displays photos of her, their sons and their grandsons.

Cecil's health is good, his mind sharp. He finds himself thinking a lot these days about his wartime experiences, including the occasional nightmare with Japanese soldiers "getting after me."

"I just felt honored and proud that I served my country," Cecil said. "Coming off a tobacco patch and going into battle, that was a hell of a change. We were just a bunch of brave boys."

ISHRA

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam President, earlier today the

Senate passed by Unanimous Consent S. 2101, the Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Human Rights Acts of 2012 (ISHRA). The bill significantly increases pressure on Iran's leaders and I thank my colleagues for their support of this important measure. As we begin negotiations with our counterparts in the House, I want to expand on my comments from my earlier statement. I do so in order to provide my colleagues some clarification regarding a few provisions in the bill.

First, section 201 of the Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Human Rights Acts of 2012 will impose sanctions, for the first time, against entities involved in joint ventures to develop petroleum resources outside of Iran that are established on or after January 1, 2002. Those joint ventures which qualify are joint ventures which involve the Government of Iran as a substantial partner or investor, or through which Iran could receive technological knowledge or equipment not previously available to it that could contribute to its ability to develop domestic petroleum resources. Further, even if ancillary agreements to implement an existing pre-2002 joint venture are agreed to on or after January 1, 2002, sanctions are not authorized to be imposed against any third-party to that joint venture or against persons who provide goods, services, technology or information to such a joint venture, as a result of their participation in or dealings with such venture, by virtue of such ancillary agreements.

In addition, this legislation seeks to continue the long-standing tradition of ensuring that humanitarian trade, including agricultural commodities, food, medicine and medical products is specifically exempted by Congress from sanctions, on the condition that such trade be licensed by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, or OFAC. It is becoming more apparent that U.S. financial sanctions targeting Iran's banking sector are causing increased concern among businesses and banks of our allies. The fear is that engaging in humanitarian trade in the current sanctions environment might lead to sanctions for legitimately licensed humanitarian trade.

However, it is not and has not been the intent of U.S. policy to harm the Iranian people by prohibiting humanitarian trade that is licensed by the U.S. Treasury Department. OFAC consistently issues many licenses, both general and specific, for this type of trade. The practical financing difficulties arising today between banks and those engaging in licensed humanitarian trade can be best addressed by U.S. Government officials, who should do more to make it clear that no U.S. sanctions will be imposed against third-country banks that facilitate OFAC-licensed or exempted humanitarian trade. The Administration must make that clear in public statements, in private meetings with foreign financial institutions, and elsewhere as appropriate.

Misinterpretation of U.S. law by foreign financial institutions should no longer deny the people of Iran the benefit of OFAC-approved humanitarian trade.

I want to close by again thanking my colleagues for their support of ISHRA. I think this action sends an important message to the Iranians and the world that the U.S. will continue to increase sanctions until Iran verifiably abandons its illicit nuclear program. As we begin our work with the House, I will continue to press for the strongest and most effective sanctions legislation possible.

I yield the floor.

CUBAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, today I wish to commemorate the 110th anniversary of Cuba's independence. On May 20, 1902, after a series of rebellions against foreign rule, Cuba finally gained its freedom from the Spanish empire. I am honored to join with Cubans around the world in commemorating this day.

At the same time, we must remember that the island nation still remains under the tyranny of an authoritarian regime. We can never forget that the Castro regime continues to jail its political opponents, and it still holds an American hostage. Once again, I rise today to urge the Cuban regime in the strongest possible terms to immediately and unconditionally release Mr. Alan Gross.

Today, we reaffirm our solidarity with the people of Cuba. Now more than ever, the United States must continue policies that promote respect for the fundamental principles of political freedom, democracy, and human rights, in a manner consistent with the aspirations of the people of Cuba.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT BUILDING IN ETHIOPIA

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, to mark the occasion of President Obama's Camp David G8 Summit focusing, in part, on the problem of food security in Africa, I want to take this opportunity to address the necessity for the United States to help foster stable and democratic nations as partners as we build multilateral coalitions to tackle global issues like hunger and poverty.

Alaska is a long way from Africa, but the citizens of my State are committed to a stable and prosperous Africa. Many Alaskans contribute their time and resources toward this goal.

A year ago in Deauville, France, President Obama joined other leaders of the G8 in reaffirming that "democracy lays the best path to peace, stability, prosperity, shared growth and development." As the events in North Africa and the Middle East have shown, supporting reliable autocrats who are helpful on matters of security and economics at the expense of human dig-

nity, basic democratic rights, and access to economic opportunity is more perilous than ever to long-term U.S. national security interests.

It is for this reason that I make a few points about our reliable partner in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia. Two weeks ago at the World Economic Forum, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi made hopeful remarks about the virtues of democratic society. I publically commit my continuing support for efforts to make such important principles a reality in Ethiopia. It is in the U.S. interest to match Ethiopia's progress in economic development and poverty reduction with movement toward economic opportunity, social justice and judicial independence. It has been said that basic human rights and free and fair elections are nothing but dreams for all except for the developed countries of the world. I do not believe that to be true; Ethiopia is ready to realize that dream. To foster the benefits of a diverse citizenry, the many political prisoners and journalists should be released, the Charities and Societies Act, as designed and as it is implemented, should be prevented from strangling peaceful civil society advocacy.

Beginning in 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt and Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II launched a long and mutually beneficial history of working together on important geopolitical and economic strategic partnerships that last to this day. Our friend and partner, Ethiopia, has been a champion with the United States during many critical times for almost 110 years. When Italy invaded Ethiopia, we refused to recognize the conquest. When the United States asked for help during the Cold War, Haile Selassie was ready to help. When the regime of Mengistu Haile-Mariam failed, the United States came to Ethiopia's side with help to prevent violence in Addis Ababa, by facilitating Mengistu's departure. We gave this support for the mutual benefit and promise of democratization in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's macroeconomic successes of rapid growth rates and better than average performance in poverty reduction have been celebrated at this past week's G8 Summit, and at the recent World Economic Forum. There Prime Minister Meles pondered aloud:

What is the substantive political thing that creates such an environment [of fair economic opportunity for all citizens]? The one [thing] that creates such an environment is an engaged citizenry that is able to create an environment where corruption and loot cannot happen at the lower level, at the mid-level, at the higher level, and that goes beyond elections every four and five years.

On the microeconomic level, aside from the lack of progress on land reform, this is good news indeed, given recent complaints about poor state of economic opportunity for all of Ethiopia's citizens. We are hopeful this is a sign that Ethiopia's federal ministries are ready to engage and assist the local citizenry in issues that relate to their